

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill Number: HB 50**

**51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013**

**Tracking Number: .191016.1**

**Short Title: No Funds for Certain School of Ed. Programs**

**Sponsor(s): Representatives Jimmie C. Hall and Larry A. Larrañaga**

**Analyst: LaNysha Adams**

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**Bill Summary:**

HB 50 would enact a new section of statute to:

- require that, to qualify for state funding, a college of education or teacher preparation program at a public postsecondary institution must instruct students in how to teach reading in courses that:
  - are based on current scientifically based reading research and the science of reading;
  - are aligned with Public Education Department (PED)-adopted reading standards; and
  - include strategies and assessment measures to ensure that beginning teachers are proficient in teaching reading;
- prohibit distribution of a General Fund appropriation for a public postsecondary institution to a college of education or teacher preparation program that does not provide such instruction; and
- require the Higher Education Department (HED) to certify that a college or program meets the requirements of the section.

**Fiscal Impact:**

HB 50 does not contain an appropriation.

**Fiscal Issues:**

HB 50, if enacted, would require withholding of legislative appropriations for public postsecondary institutions to the colleges of education or teacher preparation programs at those institutions under certain circumstances. According to a University of New Mexico analysis of the bill, withholding funds would impact the operation of teacher preparation colleges or programs of education.

A previous Legislative Finance Committee Fiscal Impact Report (FIR) states that in order to determine if reading courses and reading programs meet the criteria set forth in the legislation, HED will need to conduct full assessments and course evaluations, extending HED's workload. An analysis by HED stated that program certification required by the bill would occur using existing resources.

## **Substantive Issues:**

HB 50, if enacted, would require HED to share responsibility for approval of teacher preparation programs based on whether their reading courses meet statutory standards. Currently, that approval authority is vested in PED, pursuant to 2001 LESC-endorsed legislation that requires that:

- a person seeking elementary licensure have completed six hours of reading courses; and a person seeking secondary licensure have completed three hours of reading courses in subject matter content; and
- PED withhold approval from a college of education or teacher preparation program that fails to offer a course on teaching reading that meets the requirements included in HB 50.

The Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) has examined the teaching of reading for several years:

- In 2003, the LESC heard a presentation describing how PED was implementing the statutory requirement regarding research-based reading in teacher preparation programs.
- In 2009, however, the LESC heard testimony concerning a report by the National Council on Teacher Quality entitled *Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers: Are New Mexico's Education School Graduates Ready to Teach Reading and Mathematics in Elementary Classrooms?*. The report claimed, based on a review of the curricula and syllabi of reading courses in teacher preparation programs in the state, that most New Mexico programs were not preparing candidates to teach the science of reading, and that the programs used a wide variety of reading textbooks, most of which did not address the science of reading.
- In 2010, the LESC endorsed and the Legislature passed HJM 16, *Study Reading Curricula in Teacher Education*. The memorial requested that the New Mexico Deans and Directors of Colleges of Education form a work group to examine the curricula and assigned text materials of all required reading courses in programs that prepare teachers for state licensure, to determine if those courses meet the statutory requirement that they be based on current scientifically based research. The work group, which included three deans and directors of teacher preparation programs and three members of the LESC, presented a report to the full LESC in December 2010 with findings and recommendations;
- In 2010, based on a review of course materials of the nine public (and two private) elementary education teacher licensure programs in New Mexico conducted by reading experts contracted by the work group, findings included the following:
  - while the reviewers' assessments pointed to a wide variance among the programs in how well their required reading courses for elementary teachers prepared candidates in the science of reading instruction, every program showed room for improvement on one or more of the criteria used in the reviews; and
  - on the whole, New Mexico teacher education programs "missed the target" in addressing the science of reading instruction "to a disappointing degree."

- At the October 2011 LESC meeting, the LESC heard testimony describing the implementation of recommendations of House Joint Memorial (HJM) 16, *Study Reading Curricula in Teacher Education*:
  - the Dean of the College of Education at New Mexico State University stated that the teacher preparation programs participated in a meeting with reading faculty from teacher education programs statewide;
  - the Dean also explained that during the 2011 spring semester, a review of the reports found that over 180 educational actions incorporated scientifically based reading research in the curricula and programs; and
  - statements from the programs' reports, the Dean noted, demonstrate that teacher education programs in New Mexico integrate:
    - scientifically based research components in reading programs;
    - field experiences that include more diagnostic and assessment work with students, including scientifically based research components that can be used in classrooms with children;
    - increased English language learner instructional activities and assessments; and
    - text additions.
  
- In 2011, the LESC endorsed and the Legislature passed HB 74a, *Science of Teaching Reading Requirement*, which amends the *School Personnel Act* to require that, to qualify for licensure to teach grades K-5, a candidate must demonstrate an understanding of, and ability to apply, the scientific research on teaching reading by passing a "rigorous assessment of the candidate's knowledge of the science of teaching reading" for elementary Level 1 and alternative Level 1 licensure, beginning in January 1, 2013.
  
- In November 2012, the LESC devoted an entire day to discuss reading initiatives statewide and to address what five selected states (Texas, North Carolina, Maryland, Kentucky, and Delaware) have done to increase their fourth grade reading proficiency scores on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP). Regarding the new reading assessment, PED reported that it was aligned with the Common Core State Standards, administered to the first cohort of teacher candidates in September 2012, and final assessment scores provided to participants in December 2012.

**Background:**

According to the Education Commission of the States (ECS), learning to read is an essential foundation for success in our society. Research shows that children who are not proficient readers by the end of third grade have difficulties throughout the course of their schooling, perform poorly in other subjects and may never graduate.

The data from the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the only assessment that provides comparable data among the states and is known as the *Nation's Report Card*, show little to no improvement in fourth grade reading proficiency for New Mexico:

- just 20 percent of fourth graders tested proficient or better in reading; and
- this performance was not statistically different from that on the 1992 NAEP in reading for fourth graders in New Mexico, while NAEP scores in reading for fourth graders

nationwide have improved from 27 percent proficient in 1992 to 34 percent proficient in 2011.

In a presentation to the LESC during the 2012 interim, ECS staff reported that:

- New Mexico’s largest minority group, Hispanic students, is underperforming their cohort in five comparison states;
- New Mexico’s English language learner (ELL) student population and students qualifying for free and reduced-price lunch is higher than in five comparison states;
- in the five comparison states that have improved their fourth grade reading proficiency on NAEP since 1992, seamless P-3 education boosts achievement for all students, particularly for low-income and ELL student populations; and
- several common themes indicating best practices that may have contributed to the five comparison states improvements in fourth grade reading proficiency on the NAEP, including:
  - teaching preparation focused on the science of teaching reading (e.g., Kentucky requires instruction in reading for licensure);
  - professional development and training;
  - early intervention strategies;
  - the creation of quality rating systems to measure program effectiveness in preparing students; and
  - summer reading programs where student Lexia Reading measures are used to examine reading levels.

According to the National Council of Teaching Quality (NCTQ) *2012 State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, New Mexico received a “D+” grade in aspects of the state’s teacher preparation policies. However, the *2012 State Teacher Policy Yearbook* also named New Mexico as one of 10 states with a strong practice in measuring new teachers’ knowledge of the science of reading; even though the assessment was under development at the time they conducted the review.

**Committee Referrals:**

HEC/HAFC

**Related Bills:**

HB 167 *Teacher Licensure Content Knowledge* (Identical to SB 418)

SB 418 *Teacher Licensure Content Knowledge* (Identical to HB 167)